



Chesapeake Bay Program Update: Beyond 2025

September 5, 2025



Chesapeake Bay Program

- Revising the Watershed Agreement
- Public Feedback
- EPA CBP Budget (Advisory Committee funding)



Chesapeake Executive Council Charges

- 2022 EC charge directed the Principals' Staff Committee to recommend a critical path forward that prioritizes and outlines the next steps for meeting the goals and outcomes of the *Watershed Agreement* **by and beyond 2025**.
- 2024 EC charge charted a path forward for revising the *Watershed Agreement* by the end of 2025.



Chesapeake Bay Program Partnership Executive Council Charge to the Principals' Staff Committee: Charting a Course to 2025 and Beyond Adopted October 11, 2022

As the Chesapeake Bay Program (CBP) partnership nears the 2025 date that the partnership set for several of the goals and outcomes under the *Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement (Watershed Agreement)*, there are many successes to celebrate. At the same time, emerging issues and changing conditions (e.g., climate change, growth, new scientific data) have impacted the levels of effort needed to meet our collective restoration priorities. We, as a partnership, remain committed to using the best available science in restoring the Chesapeake Bay as we accelerate toward the deadline and anticipate continued progress post-2025.

Thus, this Executive Council charges the Principals' Staff Committee (PSC) in recommending a critical path forward that prioritizes and outlines the next steps for meeting the goals and outcomes of the *Watershed Agreement* leading up to and beyond 2025. The PSC is to report back to the Executive Council at our 2023 annual meeting with recommendations on how to best address and integrate new science and restoration strategies leading up to 2025. At our 2024 annual meeting, the PSC is to prepare recommendations that continue to address new advances in science and restoration, along with a focus on our partnership for going beyond 2025.

In undertaking such a process, the PSC should address the following considerations:

Science

- Identify new and emerging scientific data and studies which could modify our progress reporting and adaptive management approach, as well as the goals and outcomes under the *Watershed Agreement*.
- Enhance our monitoring and reporting capabilities to improve our understanding of existing conditions and trends.
- Define the existing and emerging challenges (e.g., climate change conditions, increasing growth, diversity, equity, inclusion and justice considerations) to accomplishing the partnership's work under the *Watershed Agreement*, and how addressing those challenges might alter our collective restoration priorities, including the possibility of extending the target date for completing restoration of water quality beyond 2025.
- Identify opportunities to leverage action across multiple goals and outcomes of the *Watershed Agreement*.

Restoration

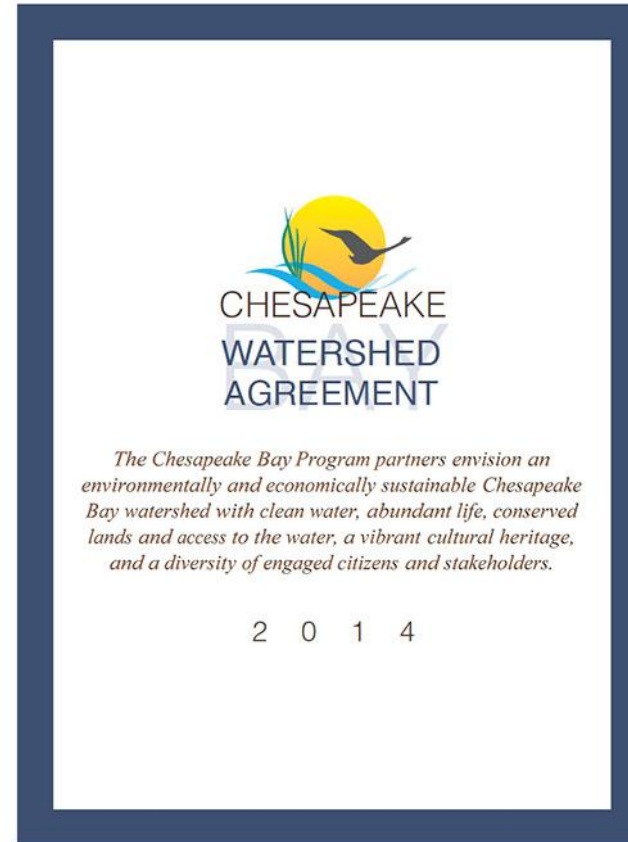
- Develop and begin to implement a communication strategy that identifies key partnership successes, associated ecosystem improvements and areas where more effort is needed.
- Provide snapshots of outcome attainability under the Agreement (e.g., which outcomes are likely to be met by the date(s) set by the partnership, which won't, and why) and options for communicating these snapshots to demonstrate progress in achieving our outcomes and the remaining work to be done, including gaps to be addressed.

Partnership

- Focus on moving beyond 2025 by seeking ways in which restoration can be relevant to all communities within the watershed.
- Assess the overall partnership to determine whether we
 - Are effectively hearing from and listening to all stakeholders, and
 - Have systems of evaluation and decision-making to enable meaningful action and allocation of partnership resources.
- Based on this assessment, develop recommendations for potential improvement.

Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement

- Vision
- Preamble
- Principles
- Goals & Outcomes
- Management Strategies
- Affirmation by the Signatories



Proposed Revisions to the 2014 Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement

1 VISION, 10 GOALS, 31 OUTCOMES



1 VISION, 4 GOALS, 21 OUTCOMES



Sustainable Fisheries



Toxic Contaminants



Healthy Watersheds



Public Access



Stewardship



Climate Resiliency



Land Conservation



Environmental Literacy



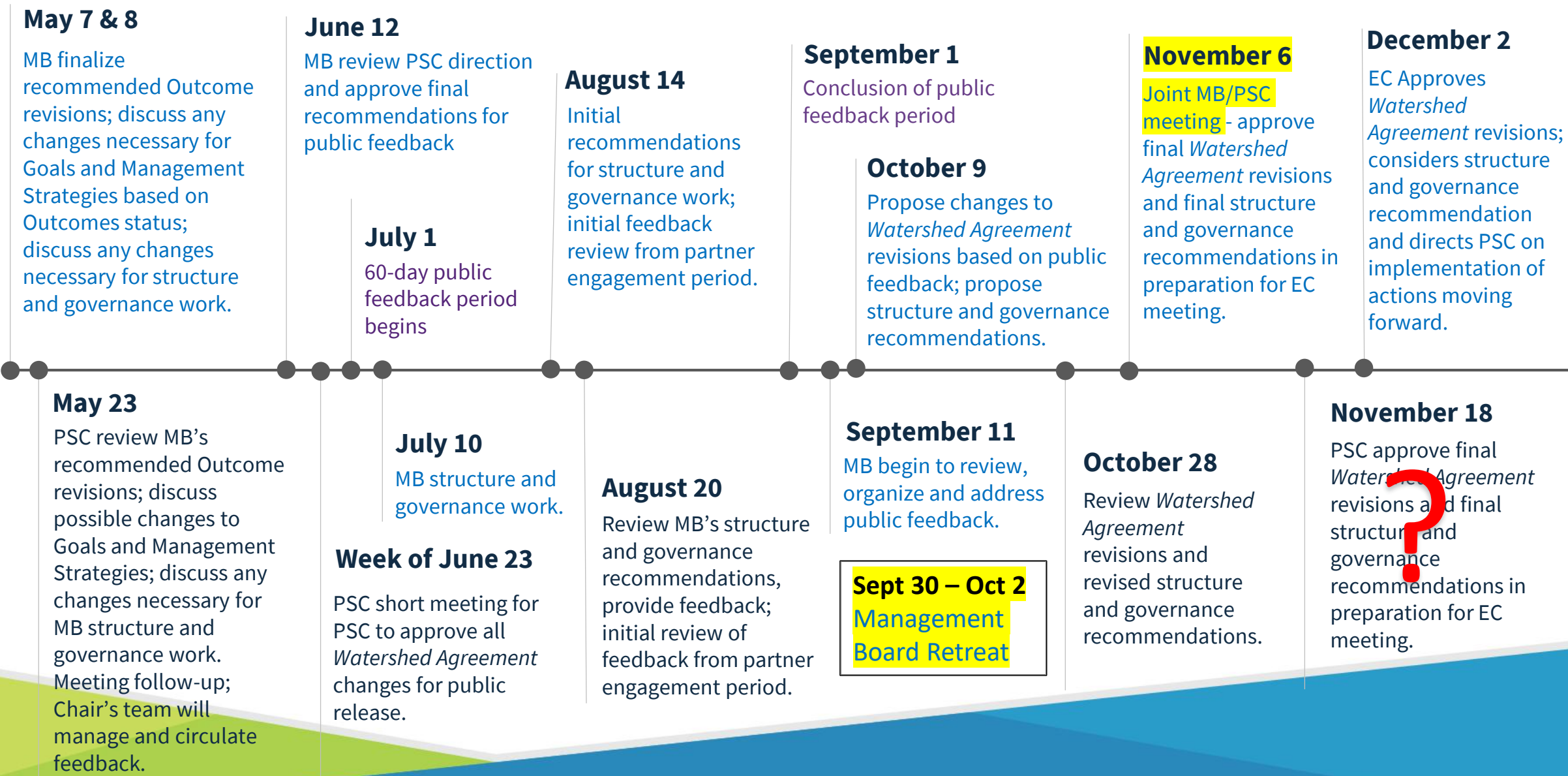
Vital Habitats



Water Quality



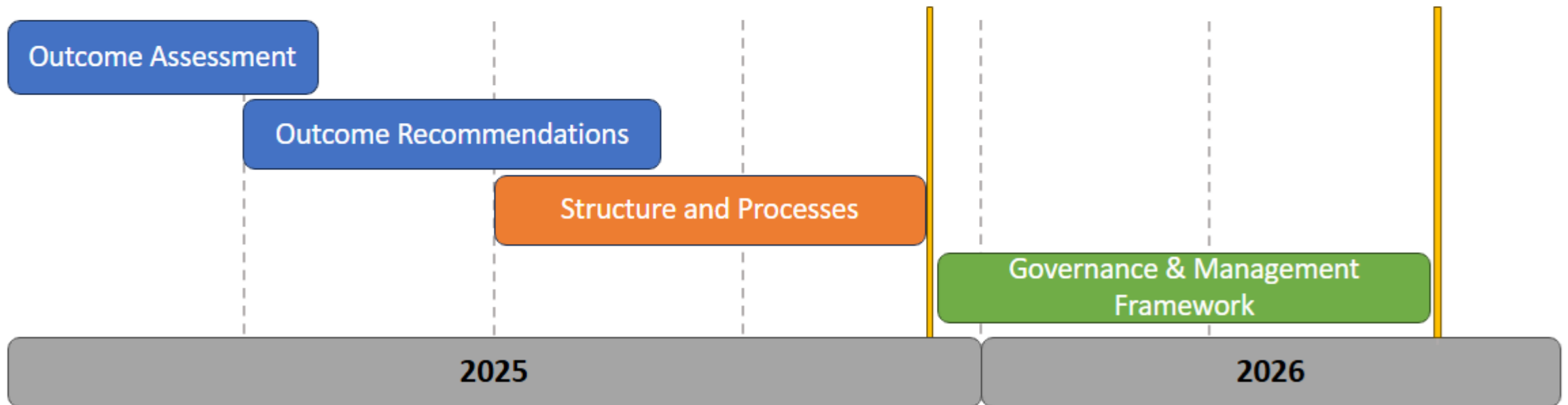
Timeline for the rest of 2025



Specifically, the 2024 Executive Council Charge:

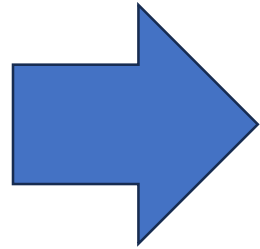
“...direct the Principals’ Staff Committee to complete the following by December 1, 2025:

1. Revisions to the 2014 Chesapeake Bay Watershed Agreement with modifications to the existing vision, principles, preamble, goals, and **outcomes...**”
2. ...Recommending this simplified and streamlined **partnership structure and processes** to the Executive Council **in as much detail as possible...**”
3. Subsequent changes which incorporate this revised structure and processes into the **Governance and Management Framework** for the Chesapeake Bay Program do not need to occur until June 2026.



Streamlining Structure and Reviewing Governance

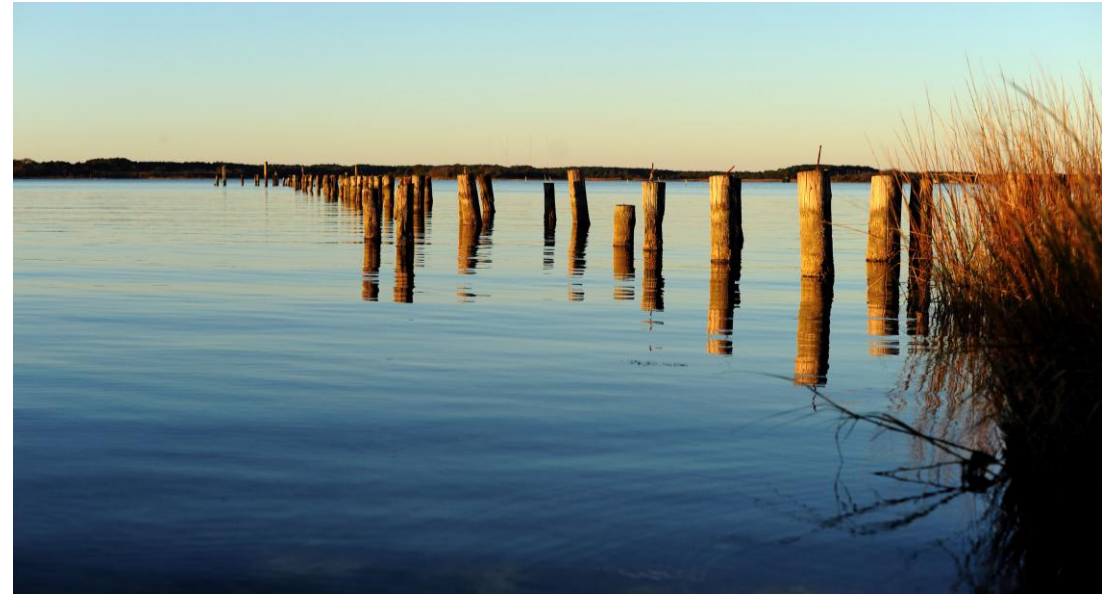
A small team is leading an informal process to aid the Management Board and Principals' Staff Committee in developing recommendations for streamlining the structure and governance process of the partnership.



- Clarifying membership roles and responsibilities to strengthen accountability and adaptability
- Revising the adaptive management framework to ensure regular assessment and clear alignment of actions and responsibilities
- Refining decision-making processes to ensure broad representation and agile science-based decision making
- Strengthening communication, engagement and integration across the Program to align goals and enhance coordination among program units
- Establishing a logical framework and governance structure to produce results that align with the goals and outcomes of the Watershed Agreement

Public Feedback Process

- Public feedback open July 1– August 30.
- Over 2,000 unique comments from about 355 commentors
- Comments will be collected, reviewed and integrated as appropriate into the updated Agreement. Summary for MB on 9/11.
- All **RESPONSIVE** comments received, as well as a redlined version of the updated Agreement will be posted online at chesapeakebay.net/beyond2025.
- Redlined version of Agreement to be available for discussion at MB retreat.



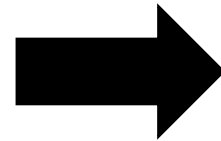
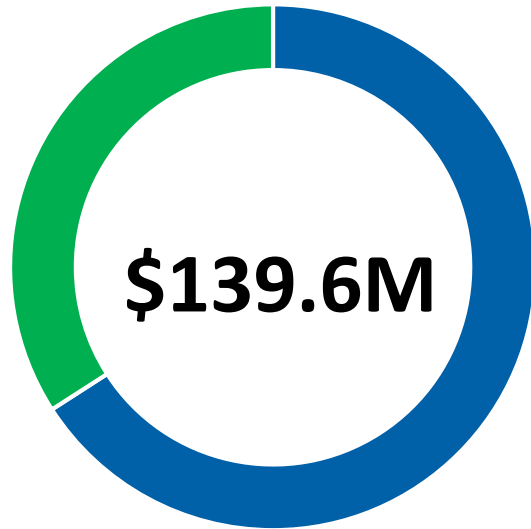
Next Steps for the Watershed Agreement



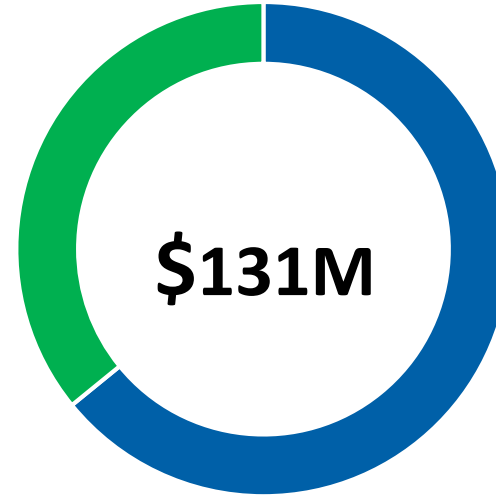
Date of Action	Deliverable / Decision
July – August 2025	60-day public review and engagement period for updated Watershed Agreement
Sept – Oct 2025	PSC reviews public feedback and revises Watershed Agreement as needed
November 2025	PSC approves final updated Watershed Agreement for Executive Council consideration
December 2025	Chesapeake Executive Council holds annual meeting; reviews and approves updated Watershed Agreement

FY 2024 EPA Chesapeake Bay Operating Budget

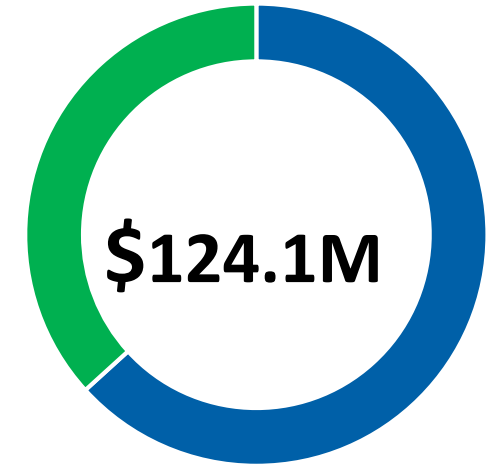
Appropriated Funds



CBPO Operating Budget



Grants, Contracts, and Interagency Agreements



■ Annual Approp. - \$92M

■ Infrastructure - \$47.6M


■ Annual Approp. - \$84M

■ Infrastructure - \$47M

■ Annual Approp. - \$78.5M

■ Infrastructure - \$45.6M

Budget Notes

- FY2025 – Level appropriations for EPA CBPO
 - Higher expenses
 - FY2026 – House and Senate budget bills show reductions for EPA overall
 - FY2026 – Last year for Infrastructure funding
 - EPA is committed to supporting all 4 Advisory Committees
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Thank you!

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